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50X1-HUM

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50X1-HUM

REPORT OF JUNE 1953 UPRISINGS IN GDR AND SOVIET SECTOR OF BERLIN

50X1-HUM

I Background of the June 1953 Events

- A. The Political Situation at the Beginning of June 1953 in East Berlin and the GDR
- B. Introduction of the "New Course"
- C. Reactions of the Populace
- D. Policy Trends in East Berlin and the GDR Before the June Uprisings

II. Outbreak of the Riots

- A. Events in East Berlin up to and including 15 June 1953
- B. Sequence of Events on 16 June 1953 in East Berlin
- C. The Question of Responsibility for the Uprisings

50X1-HUM

- 1 -

|                |      |                    |  |              |  |
|----------------|------|--------------------|--|--------------|--|
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S-E-C-R-E-T

50X1-HUM

## III. Further Development and Spread of the Riots

- A. Sequence of Events on 17 June 1953 in East Berlin
- B. Spread of the Riots in the GDR
- C. Abatement of the Uprisings

## IV. Use of Soviet Occupation Troops During the Uprisings

- A. Use of Soviet Troops in East Berlin
- B. Use of Soviet Troops in the GDR
- C. Summary of Commitment of Soviet Army Units in East Berlin and the GDR
- D. Alerting of Soviet Air Force During the Uprisings

## V. Use of People's Police During the Uprisings in East Berlin and the GDR

- A. Effects of the "New Course" on the KVP (Garrisoned People's Police)
- B. Use and Conduct of the KVP During the Uprisings
- C. Sea Forces During the Uprisings

## VI. Psychological Background and Consequences of the Uprisings

## Enclosure 1 - List of GDR Cities Involved in the Uprisings

## Enclosure 2 - List of Soviet Combat Divisions Used to Quell the Uprisings]

## I. BACKGROUND OF THE JUNE 1953 EVENTS

A. The Political Situation at the Beginning of June 1953 in East Berlin and the GDR

The radical measures to bolshevize the Soviet Zone of Germany, which were to lead to the final liquidation of independent farming, of private industry, and of the bourgeoisie, the terror methods in the administration of law, the war against the churches, and the increasing food shortage all resulted in extreme discontent on the part of broad strata of the population during the weeks preceding the June uprisings. The high refugee totals are eloquent evidence of this. Especially after April 1953, when Pavel Yudin was appointed Political Adviser to the Soviet Control Commission to succeed Ambassador Vladimir S. Semenov, who was transferred to the Moscow Foreign Ministry, the bolshevization policy was carried out by Walter Ulbricht in an atmosphere of severity never before experienced in the GDR. The resolution of the ZK (Central Committee) of the SED (Socialist Unity Party) on 14 May 1953, which directed the Council of Ministers to effect a 10-percent increase in the work norms, and the corresponding decree of the Council of Ministers on 28 May 1953, which raised

- 2 -

S-E-C-R-E-T

50X1-HUM

S-E-C-R-E-T

the work norms without raising the pay, evoked great animosity on the part of the working classes. The implementation of this decree, therefore, was destined to be the final impetus for the June riots.

#### B. Introduction of the "New Course"

On 28 May 1953, the Soviet government announced the dissolution of the Soviet Control Commission in Germany, which had been in existence since October 1949. At the same time, it was announced that the USSR Council of Ministers had decided to establish the position of High Commissioner, with headquarters in Berlin. Semenov had been relieved as Political Adviser to the Soviet Control Commission a few weeks prior to this time, was appointed to this position. Pavel Yudin was named Deputy High Commissioner.

With Semenov's appointment to High Commissioner, Moscow introduced a change in the course of its policy in the GDR, the effects of which became especially evident in the following declarations and measures:

1. The measures of the party (SED) and of the government during recent months, which amounted to a forced Bolshevization of the GDR, were branded as "serious errors" in the Politburo's resolutions of 2 June 1953. The Politburo demanded that the recent decrees issued in the course of the intensified class struggle be canceled in order to improve decisively the living standard of the populace and to strengthen the uniform application of justice in the GDR."

2. At a conference on 10 June 1953 with Bishop Gibelius and five bishops from the GDR, the representatives of the Soviet Zone government, led by Minister President Grotzschel, promised the Protestant Church that all measures inimical to the Church in the GDR would be abolished, and declared themselves prepared to guarantee unimpeded church activities in accordance with the provisions of the Constitution.

3. At a meeting of the GDR Council of Ministers on 11 June 1953, the demands of the SED resolutions were accepted, and a number of recent measures which served the radical policy of compulsory Bolshevization were abolished.

The agreement of 10 June 1953 with the Protestant bishops of the GDR was explicitly affirmed.

At a training course for agitators on 11 June 1953, these resolutions were interpreted to mean that the Five-Year Plan per se would not be affected, but that the production of consumer goods would now receive priority consideration. Considerations were drawn with conditions in the USSR during the period from 1924 to 1925, to justify the postponement of the socialization of agriculture. On 13 June 1953, a source in the Ministry of Agricultural and Transportation Machinery verified the fact that, on the basis of the decisions of the SED Politburo, supplying the population was taking precedence over the Five-Year Plan.

The "new course" started by Semenov was also reflected in the following additional measures taken by the GDR governments:

1. The premilitary GST (Society for Sport and Technology) training was temporarily discontinued. On 17 June 1953, it was decreed that the training was to be resumed only under certain camouflage measures. The decision to discontinue the premilitary GST training in its previous form was announced at a training course for agitators on 8 and 11 June 1953, and was justified by the argument that the easing of conditions, as clearly outlined on the high-policy level, was not to be obstructed by false political-militant measures. This decision was also confirmed by a report on a conference of a GST Kreis management group which was held on 12 June 1953.

- 3 -

S-E-C-R-E-T

S-E-C-R-E-T

50X1-HUM

2. By order of the GDR Council of Ministers, all work on the Ruegen harbor construction project was suspended on 11 June 1953. Mothballing work on the installations still under construction was scheduled to be completed by 31 August 1953. This order, however, appears to involve only a temporary suspension of work on this project.

### C. Reactions of the Populace

The intense dissatisfaction of the populace -- particularly of the workers -- with the regime in power and with the measures of the GDR government led to localized and short-lived strikes on several occasions during the weeks before 16-17 June 1953. Thus, strikes had already taken place at the following large plants and enterprises in the GDR:

"Fortschritt" Shaft of the Mansfeld copper mining region, on 17 April 1953.

Premnitz Artificial Fiber Factory (rayon factory), on 28 April 1953.

Berlin VEB (People-Owned Enterprise) Machine Tool Factory, Berlin, Krautstrasse, and its Marzahn branch plant, on 6 May 1953.

FEMAG (probably Fimag Electrical Equipment Plant), Finsterwalde, on 27 May 1953.

VEB Gaselan (Gas and Electrical Installations), Fuerstenwalde, on 27 May 1953.

Kjellberg Electrical Equipment Factory Finsterwalde, on 28 May 1953.

Winding Shop (Mischel) of the Cottbus Railroad Repair Yard, on 29 May 1953.

Baumer LEW (Locomotive Construction and Electrical Goods Plant), Hennigsdorf, probably around the end of May 1953.

Chemnitz Refrigerator Plant, belonging to VVB Nahrung (Administration of People-Owned Enterprises for Machinery for the Food-Processing, Refrigeration, and Chemical Industries), on 3 June 1953.

Krautheim Armor Plate Plant, a SAG (Soviet Corporation), Chemnitz (now Karl Marx Stadt), on 3 June 1953.

After receiving the wages which had been reduced on the basis of the "non-fulfilled percentages of the new norms determined by the Council of Ministers on 28 May," the workers at the [East] Metallurgical Combine in Fuerstenberg/Oder went on strike on 6 June 1953. The workers demanded "old norms-old wages."

During the period from 6 to 15 June 1953, the same demand which was voiced in Fuerstenberg led to strikes in at least eight large plants (including Baiseler LEW in Hennigsdorf, Premnitz Artificial Fiber Factory, Berlin VEB Machine Tool Factory, and VEB Gaselan in Fuerstenwalde).

The resolutions of the SED Politburo and the government decrees based thereon "for the improvement of the living standard" were at first favorably received by a large part of the GDR populace, particularly by the working classes. Thus, for example, the rise in morale was obvious after the release of amnestied persons in Neuruppin on 12 and 13 June. On this occasion, the fact that the Vopo (People's Police) kept in the background, while the Soviet soldiers took no note of the happenings, encouraged the joyful crowd even more.

- 4 -

S-E-C-R-E-T

50X1-HUM

S-E-C-R-E-T

To propagandize the 9 June resolutions of the SED Politburo and the 11 June government decrees, which were based on the "new course," functionaries throughout the GDR brought forth the customary resolutions under the motto "The workers thank the party and the government" (for their insight and their vision, as manifested in the new decrees).

#### D. Policy Trends in East Berlin and the GDR Before the June Uprisings

The new course of Soviet policy in the GDR, which was introduced with the appointment of Semenov to High Commissioner in [East] Germany, has an objective which is predominantly directed toward foreign policy and must be regarded as part of Moscow's new offensive. This new course strives to subvert the Western conception of political, economic, and especially military inclusion of the German Federal Republic in an emphatically anti-Soviet system, directed by the US, by means of an internal German approach under the pretense of a unification plan fictitiously ascribed to the Potsdam agreement. Moscow's Germany policy, therefore, again heavily stressed the Potsdam agreement. The resolutions of the SED Politburo and the government decrees of 11 June, in which the shift in course shows up especially clearly, unquestionably resulted from a direct order by Semenov, who wished to eliminate the most obvious obstacles to an understanding with the West. A resolution of the Politburo explicitly states: "The important goal of the unification of Germany requires both sides to take measures which realistically facilitate the reconciliation of both parts of Germany."

However, the ostensible change in attitude toward the West can be regarded neither as a surrender of the former bolshevization intentions nor as a "purely propagandistic" variation in the cold war. On the contrary, this change signifies a continuance of the old operational aims with new tactical means. The fact that the measures are solely of a tactical nature was expressed as follows, at a GDR press conference which took place on 16 June and which had not yet been influenced by the unrest in East Berlin: "Pursuit of the important political objectives is to be continued, unaffected by concessions and the amnesty." Compared with the inflexible bolshevist methods practiced by Yudin and Ulbricht until Semenov's return the "new course" can be considered as a genuine, constructive policy change in the GDR because the flexibility of Soviet policy has been re-established. That is, if the reunification and neutralization of Germany should not materialize, then Yudin and Ulbricht will still be there to revert to the methods of bolshevization of the GDR.

With respect to foreign policy, the "Semenov course" is aimed less at direct preparations for Four-Power conferences than at an all-German movement. The reunification and neutralization of Germany is doubtless to be prepared in a way directed toward prejudicing attitudes on essential points in the event of later Four-Power conferences and, thereby, toward gradually undermining US plans.

With respect to domestic policy, the revision of the former bolshevization program applied to those points which especially impeded the economic and psychological situation. The war against the church, the intensification of bolshevist measures in the field of agriculture, the preference shown heavy industry to the detriment of consumer goods production and, thus, to the supply of the civilian population, the forced elimination of retail trade, various measures in the cultural field, and, finally, the increase in work norms without any increase in wages -- all these factors had evoked powers of resistance which not only seriously obstructed the functioning of the economic and political apparatus but also indicated that further tightening of bolshevist measures would be unprofitable. Thus, the propaganda plan, according to which the revision of the Ulbricht course was worked out, was based on the premise that the "mistakes" of the SED government did not involve a deviation from the line but indicated that the SED functionaries were too far ahead of the people. This error was to be rectified by a readjustment of propaganda to the level of public opinion.

- 5 -

S-E-C-R-E-T

S-E-C-R-E-T

50X1-HUM

The various local strikes preceding the events of 17 June 1953 clearly indicated the rift between the population and the terror regime and, to some extent, proved alarming to the Soviets. These strikes may have expedited the suspension of the various measures aimed at the radical compulsory bolshevization of the GDR, but they definitely were not the cause of this yielding on the part of the GDR party and government offices.

## II. OUTBREAK OF THE RIOTS

### A. Events in East Berlin up to and including 15 June 1953

On 5 and 6 June 1953, heated discussions were held at Block 40, a construction site on Stalin-Allee/North in East Berlin, which was to become the starting point of the riots. These discussions concerned the new increases and the accompanying wage reductions. However, individual SED and FDGB (League of Free German Trade Unions) functionaries succeeded in calming the grumbling workers. The functionaries pointed out that Block 40 was considered the "best party organization of the SED" in Berlin.

When the new Politburo resolutions and the government measures of 11 June 1953 were discussed at the construction site, the workers agreed with the views expressed by the functionaries; i.e., if such concessions had been ordered, others could not fail to materialize.

The wages paid on 12 and 13 June 1953, -- when the workers were hoping for the cancellation of the new norms -- were again based on the new norms.

Over the weekend (13-14 June 1953), the workers from Block 40 and their families had cause to be worried about their future standard of living. They estimated that they could not manage on the newly established wages.

On Monday, 15 June 1953, a workers' meeting took place on the premises of Block 40. Under the guidance of an SED functionary, it was decided to send a "resolution of thanks" for the Politburo and government decisions of 11 June 1953 to Minister President Grotewohl and SED Secretary-General [now First Secretary] Ulbricht.

When some workers proposed that a request for the reintroduction of the old norms be incorporated in the letter of gratitude, as the logical complement to the program aimed at decisive improvement of the living standards, the majority of workers concurred. Particular importance was attached to prudent, even polite wording of the resolution. The use of the word "demand" (instead of "request"), which some embittered workers wanted, was not permitted in the resolution.

As a precaution, the chairman of the BGL (Plant Trade Union Management) notified the FDGB central office of the IG Bau-Holz (Industrial Trade Union for Wood Construction) of this resolution of Block 40, to prevent possible displeasure on the part of Grotewohl and Ulbricht. The IG Bau-Holz replied that the sending of the resolution should be postponed, and that before the start of the working day on 16 June 1953, a representative of the IG Bau-Holz would appear at Stalin-Allee to explain the problem of norms to the construction workers.

In the meantime, the resolution drafted by the Block 40 workers became known to the workers at the other construction sites of Stalin-Allee/North. With the exception of a few dissenters, the resolution was approved everywhere.

- 6 -

S-E-C-R-E-T

50X1-HUM

S-E-C-R-E-T

Some workers at Block 40 believed that the IG Bau-Holz should not be trusted and demanded that the resolution be dispatched immediately. Another worker's meeting was held, and two workers were elected delegates for the presentation of the resolution to Grotewohl and Ulbricht.

The BGL of Stalin-Allee/North requested the workers to wait until the arrival of the IG Bau-Holz representatives. However, at 1430 hours on 15 June 1953, the workers of Block 40 declared that they would not resume their work until the arrival of an authorized representative of the IG Bau-Holz and until a satisfactory adjustment of the norms problem was made.

Within the next 12 hours, the news of the strike at Block 40 spread like wildfire. Many workers of the North section of Stalin-Allee and, later, also of the South section declared their solidarity with the action of the Block 40 workers.

#### B. Sequence of Events on 16 June 1953 in East Berlin

On the morning of 16 June 1953, the workers waited at the construction sites of the North and South sections of Stalin-Allee for the authorized representative of the IG Bau-Holz. In his place, a representative of the BGL appeared at a construction site of the South section with an article by Otto Lehmann, FDGB Secretary, which had been published in the 16 June 1953 issue of the Tribune.

This article, in which Lehmann supported the norm increase with the statement that the workers had not been doing enough work and had been paid too much, aroused tremendous agitation. The article was publicized at all construction sites.

When the representative of the IG Bau-Holz appeared around 0830 hours (the working day started at 0700 hours), he was met with indignant shouts and was questioned by the assembled workers (numbering about 300) concerning Lehmann's article. The representative's exhortation to follow the old SED slogan, "First produce more, then live better," caused an uproar.

After a long discussion, it was decided to dispatch the two delegates who had been elected on 15 June 1953, to Grotewohl or Ulbricht. However, about 1000 hours, the prevailing view was that all the workers must accompany the delegates, since a strike was on in any case.

Thus about 1000 hours on 16 June 1953, 300 construction workers from the North and South sections, dressed in their work clothes, went out on the street. By 1030 hours, about 200 additional workers from nearby construction sites had joined them. Reports claiming that as many as 1,000, 1,500, or even 3,000 construction workers participated in the start of this procession are incorrect.

The crowd started off in a disorganized manner, but soon an orderly procession was formed. The workers carried a single, improvised banner bearing the inscription, "We, the construction workers, demand a reduction in the norms." At first, there were no demands for free elections, resignation of the government, etc.

Without encountering any resistance, the workers marched via Alexanderplatz, Unter den Linden, Friedrichstrasse, and Leipzigerstrasse to the square in front of the main entrance to the House of Ministries (government building); by this time, the procession had increased to a total of about 1,500 persons. During the march, their loud demands were directed against the norm increase and the price policies.

- 7 -

S-E-C-R-E-T

50X1-HUM

S-E-C-R-E-T

When the two delegates from Block 40 demanded to speak to Grotewohl or Ulbricht at the entrance to the government building, the crowd pressed forward. When neither Grotewohl nor Ulbricht appeared, there were mass chants and -- for the first time -- political demands such as "Down with the government!"

The cries of protest by the steadily increasing crowd resulted in the appearance of Heinrich Rau, Planning Minister (possibly refers to Rau's position as Coordinator of Industry and Transport) and Deputy Minister-President, and of Fritz Selbmann, Minister of Metallurgy and Ore-Mining (according to a decision of the SED Central Committee on 6 October 1953, Selbmann was appointed Minister of Heavy Industry) at a window of the government building. The crowd, however, demanded that Ulbricht and Grotewohl appear.

When the clamor subsided, a table was carried in front of the entrance steps and placed in the midst of the crowd. Selbmann appeared and spoke, but he was constantly interrupted by loud exclamations. When he called out: "I am a worker myself," the crowd replied, "But you have long since forgotten that!" When he addressed them as "Dear colleagues," the crowd shouted back, "You are not our colleague -- you are a scoundrel and a traitor."

Then a worker jumped up on the platform with Selbmann and spoke, using approximately the following words: "What you (Selbmann) have told us does not interest us at all. We want to be free. Our demonstration is not only directed against the norms. We are not only from Stalin-Allee but from all over Berlin. This is a revolt by the people. We demand free and secret elections." The man remained anonymous and disappeared into the crowd.

When Selbmann tried to continue his speech, he was again interrupted by chants such as "We want to be free" and "We demand free elections."

Another speaker from the ranks of the workers called out, "Colleagues, our demands will surely not be fulfilled. Our strike will continue. We proclaim a general strike for tomorrow."

About 1430 hours, the following announcement was made from a loudspeaker car which appeared at the House of Ministries: "The Council of Ministers has canceled the norm increase. The workers are requested to leave the area in front of the House of Ministries."

About 1500 hours, the majority of the demonstrators had left the square in front of the ministries. Some groups, engaged in heated discussions, remained behind.

Between 1700 and 1900 hours, almost 10,000 people assembled at Rosenthal Platz.

About 1900 hours, it became known that Ulbricht and Grotewohl were to speak on the day's events at 2000 hours at an SED demonstration. An emergency meeting of the Party Aktiv, in the Friedrichstadt Palast. However, according to other reports (chiefly press reports) the Friedrichstadt Palast meeting took place at an earlier hour. Some reports claimed that the conferences in the Friedrichstadt Palast were started as early as the morning of 16 June 1953.

Thousands of people set out for the Friedrichstadt Palast; there they encountered pro-Communist demonstrators, who carried banners which read "Long live the government of the GDR!" Fighting resulted.

S-E-C-R-E-T



50X1-HUM

S-E-C-R-E-T

In their speeches, Grotewohl and Ulbricht stated, among other things, that they did not intend to avoid serious discussions with the people. Grotewohl stated further that the ZK of the SED would receive a comprehensive statement of all mistakes and all measures, and would make its decisions accordingly.

Until about 2300 hours, there were further demonstrations and scuffles between demonstrators and SED activists. The following word spread among the demonstrators: "A general strike will be held tomorrow. Assemble at 0630 hours at Strausberger Platz."

#### C. The Question of Responsibility for the Uprisings

In the light of subsequent analysis, it appears irrelevant whether the originally small-scale protest march was officially instigated, whether the existing indignation concerning the norm increases was exploited by the government, or whether the intentions to strike, which were doubtless known, were only tolerated.

There is no question of the fact that, after 8 years of suppression, a genuine rebellion occurred.

The originally small-scale demonstrations, which were probably tolerated, spread to assume tremendous proportions and thus slipped from the control of the Soviet rulers. [The following are sample opinions on the cause of the riots:]

1. A worker from Stalin-Allee attributed the cause of the strike to the norm increases; however, he differed from the foregoing eyewitness reports in that he claimed that 80 construction workers planned a strike for 16 June but were prevented by the Vopo from demonstrating. The worker said that one of the group of construction workers escaped, alerted the workers at other construction sites, and thereby started the demonstration march. (This may be another version of a press report which stated that 70 not 80 workers were to act on orders of the Communist government, but that one of the group betrayed the plan and thus started a mass demonstration.)
2. A young worker from Stalin-Allee stated that the reason for the riots was unmistakably the norm increases, which resulted in the resolution to present a joint grievance to Ulbricht, following friction with the Walter Ulbricht brigade.
3. Another good source stated that the riots were not started by the Communist government, but that they were caused by the resentment against the norm increases. However, this source was of the opinion that the reason why the riots were not quelled [by the GDR government] at the start was to prove to the world that free expression of opinion was altogether possible in the GDR. As was personally observed by this source, the Vopo not only refrained from intervening, but even cleared the way for the procession.

That the intention to tolerate small-scale demonstrations was in line with the more lenient policy of the new course is evidenced by the foregoing reports describing the tolerant attitude of the Vopo, which was doubtless ordered not to intervene. This restraint on the part of the Vopo (which was also pointed out in connection with the happenings in Neuruppin, and which can be perceived in many other reports and press announcements on border and inter-zonal traffic) may be one of the reasons for the rapid spread of the revolt on 16 June.

- 9 -

S-E-C-R-E-T

**S-E-C-R-E-T**

50X1-HUM

4. According to the report of an employee of the East Berlin Police Headquarters, the Vopo received an order on 16 June which prohibited shooting. This order was not rescinded until the Soviet troops arrived on 17 June.

It can be regarded as certain that, with the knowledge of the Politburo and the GDR government, the construction workers were to present a resolution to Grotewohl and Ulbricht. It is possible, and even probable, that the workers themselves made the decision not only to dispatch delegates but also to start a general revolt. However, there is no doubt that the GDR government expected and approved a demonstration of criticism to a limited and controlled extent. Without question, this approval was inspired by the Soviet High Commission, which, as shown by the overall developments since 11 June, was interested in a demonstrative criticism of the government and of the SED course formerly followed; it was the intention of the Soviet High Commission that this course be readjusted to the level of public opinion.

### III. FURTHER DEVELOPMENT AND SPREAD OF THE RIOTS

#### A. Sequence of Events on 17 June 1953 in East Berlin

About 0700 hours a big crowd assembled on Stalin-Allee. Word was circulated that the protest would be continued, no one would work, and the crowd would go again to Leipzigerstrasse.

At about 0745 hours, a procession of demonstrators marched from Straussberger Platz via Alexanderplatz to Leipzigerstrasse. Many curious persons joined this group. The participants chanted, "Down with the SED" and "We demand free elections."

About 0800 hours, additional Vopo squads were alerted by the East Berlin police radio. Vopo squads and truckloads of Soviet Army units were seen in the streets.

The first disarming of Vopo units occurred at 0810 hours, when the head of the demonstrators' procession and a Vopo cordon collided on Leipzigerstrasse. The crowd yielded and moved to Potsdamer Platz, where large numbers of people were also assembled on the western [sector] side.

At 0830 hours, another group of demonstrators tried to crash through the side entrances of the House of Ministries. At 0915 hours, several processions of demonstrators met at Potsdamer Platz. At 0930 hours, a large crowd of people again started in the direction of the House of Ministries. Kicks were set on fire. At 1000 hours, individual guards and patrols were ordered by the East Berlin police radio to retreat and join larger police units. At 1015 hours, the Vopo guard at Columbusplatz was disarmed. At 1020 hours, there were severe clashes and riots in front of the House of Ministries.

At 1000 hours, the ZK of the SED held a conference at the Karl Liebknecht House. All available editors and radio personnel were summoned to the meeting. Hermann Axen directed that the following general line would be taken by the newspapers and radio: "The enemy agents in West Berlin, with the aid of fascist provocateurs, are attempting to disrupt the understanding which has begun to develop among the Germans. Behind all this are the Americans, who, at the same time, want to wreck the understanding which has begun to develop between the USSR and other great powers. The imperialist agents in West Berlin are responsible for all consequences." Axen stated further that the Soviet government would intercede with the Western powers and would bring up the entire problem of West Berlin with its "nests of agents." The meeting lasted until 1100 hours.

- 10 -

**S-E-C-R-E-T**

S-E-C-R-E-T

50X1-HUM

At 1040 hours, 6-8 Soviet T-34 tanks and 6-8 armored scout cars and trucks, carrying Soviet troops, drove up in front of the House of Ministries.

At 1115 hours, demonstrators took down the red flag at Brandenburger Tor. At 1130 hours, there were mass demonstrations involving 15,000-20,000 participants, at the Lustgarten square.

At 1200 hours, Soviet tanks appeared on Unter den Linden and Leipzigerstrasse. Adolescents flung stones at the Soviet tanks in front of the House of Ministries.

At 1300 hours, a state of emergency was announced. Streets were cleared of demonstrators by Soviet tanks; the Vopo undertook "clean-up" operations, and shooting occurred. The first injury cases included leg, calf, and arm wounds as well as grazing wounds. By the evening of 17 June, 16 fatalities and more than 100 injuries were reported in East Berlin.

At 1500 hours, families of members of the government and of the ZK of the SED were evacuated in Soviet trucks to Mecklenburg (to Kuehlungsborn, a Baltic Sea resort). At 1600 hours, ZK functionaries, under the protection of Soviet tanks, were moved from the Karl Liebknecht House.

#### B. Spread of the Riots in the GDR

Reports from various sources agree that news of the riots in East Berlin reached all cities throughout the GDR as early as 16 June 1953. This news was spread rapidly by RIAS (Radio in the American Sector) and other western radio stations, as well as by railroad personnel, drivers of vehicles, and travelers. In many cities, the news led to immediate preparations for strikes and demonstrations scheduled for 17 June 1953.

Groups of strikers (Streikkomitees) at the Leuna Works decided to go to Berlin and participate in the demonstrations. They assumed, as did many other groups of demonstrators, that a central management in Berlin would direct the uprisings for the entire zone and they intended to establish contact with this central group. However, on 17 June 1953, when the Leuna workers were enroute to Berlin, Soviet troops prevented them from continuing their trip.

Apart from telephonic inquiries in East Berlin and trips undertaken by individuals to obtain information, the Leuna Workers' trip appears to have been the only noteworthy attempt to establish contact between the centers of unrest in the GDR and East Berlin. One report does claim that on 16 June 1953, 3,000-5,000 workers of the Wismuth Works, in Aus, secured 114 trucks, 2 tank cars, and one ambulance to drive to Berlin, but that Soviet troops forced them to turn back on 17 June. However, this report partly contradicts other reports received.

The strikes, demonstrations, and uprisings began almost concurrently in the GDR in the forenoon of 17 June 1953, without direct contact with the focal point of unrest in East Berlin. Conflicts of greater severity than in East Berlin occurred in various cities. The demonstrators did not restrict themselves to forming processions and attacking SED functionaries and the Vopo, but stormed administrative buildings, SED central offices, police bureaus, and prisons. In many places, buildings and documents were set on fire. In many cases, members of the Vopo and SED or SSD (State Security Service) functionaries were slain.

The countermeasures taken by the Soviets were correspondingly more severe in the GDR than in East Berlin. The percentage of fatalities and injuries in the GDR considerably exceeded the percentage in East Berlin.

- 11 -

S-E-C-R-E-T

50X1-HUM

S-E-C-R-E-T

The great number of available reports indicate that the riots on 17 and 18 June 1953 and their manifestation on a local level on the days following involved almost the whole of the GDR. It has been established that strikes, demonstrations, and riots occurred in 67 cities and industrial centers of the GDR (see Enclosure 1).

Outstanding focal points of unrest developed in the Halle, Merseburg, Leuna, Bitterfeld, Leipzig, and Magdeburg areas on 17 and 18 June 1953. There are contradictory reports as to the course of the uprisings in the uranium mining region. Violent riots and bloody clashes were reported from Brandenburg/Havel, Coswig, Erfurt, Finsterwalde, Gera, Goerlitz, Jena, Quedlinburg, Rathenow, Dessau-Rosslau, and Rostock-Lichtenhagen. The following brief summaries are based on information available on the uprisings in these focal centers:

#### 1. Halle

Strikes began in the forenoon of 17 June 1953 at the railroad-car and vehicle-body plants and the Halle Machine Factory. About 15,000 workers from the Buna Works and about 35,000 workers from the Leuna Works participated in the uprisings.

The district court and the prison were stormed, and 40 political prisoners were freed. In the course of this action, one Vopo officer was killed and three Vopo men were injured. The SED Bezirk management offices were broken into, and the Vopo guard was disarmed.

Heavy street fights occurred after the intervention of Soviet troops and the NVP. On 17 June 1953, there were 26 fatalities and 60 severely wounded cases. It can be assumed that the total number of casualties was considerably higher after the conflicts on 18 June 1953.

#### 2. Merseburg and Leuna

During hostile encounters on 17 June between workers from the Leuna Works and the Vopo, two Vopo men were lynched by the workers. Before Soviet troops occupied the key centers in the Leuna Works, fires were started in the workshops. Extensive fires caused heavy damages.

The Leuna workers marched to Merseburg to participate in the demonstrations held there. A Soviet officer who fired at a woman was slain by workers. Party offices of the SED and the FDJ (Free German Youth) in Merseburg and Leuna were demolished.

There were violent conflicts between the Vopo and demonstrators; the latter attacked Vopo men with iron bars. About 240 Vopo men took off their uniforms and threw their weapons away. There were casualties and injuries among the workers.

#### 3. Bitterfeld

Demonstrators took over the town hall and the police station. The burgomaster and SED functionaries were locked up in cellar rooms. Workers besieged the prison and released 24 prisoners. Vopo and SED functionaries were put into the prison cells.

An extensive wave of arrests began after Soviet troops intervened.

#### 4. Leipzig

The demonstrations began on 17 June 1953 with a march of silent protest, in which 5,000 workers participated. The total number of demonstrators in the city proper during the course of the day was estimated at 80,000.

- 12 -

S-E-C-R-E-T

50X1-HUM

S-E-C-R-E-T

Demonstrators used streetcar rails to storm police headquarters. The lower court (Amtsgericht) was taken over, and documents were burned. Demonstrators destroyed and set fire to the "Pavilion of the National Front." Participants in the rebellion occupied the main railroad station, stormed the police station at the railroad station, and burned uniforms of the railway police. Lord Mayor Ulich was apprehended and struck down by the demonstrators. There were mass demonstrations at the monument commemorating the Battle of Leipzig; eyewitnesses estimate that 25,000-30,000 persons participated. The house of the FDJ Kreis management, located on Ritterstrasse, was stormed. SED offices were stormed and burned down.

At 1100 hours on 17 June 1953, a state of emergency was declared. Vopo units and some Soviet troops were used; stronger Soviet forces apparently were not used until the afternoon.

The first conflicts between Soviet troops and demonstrators resulted in seven fatalities and 120 injury cases. When the victims of the Leipzig riots were cremated, 68 urns were counted. It is not clear whether these figures account for the total number of deaths caused in Leipzig.

A wave of arrests occurred on 18 June. Three workers were court-martialed and shot.

#### 5. Magdeburg

The Thaelmann Plant (formerly Krupp) was the starting point for the demonstrations on 17 June. The participants in the riots stormed and occupied the town hall, the court building, the trade-union building, the SED building, and the FDJ center. The Vopo guard unit at the main railroad station was disbanded; one railroad car for the transport of prisoners was broken into. The Magdeburg-Neustadt prison was stormed, and 364 political prisoners were set free. The attempt to storm the Magdeburg-Sudenburg prison failed because the Vopo fired at the demonstrators; this action alone resulted in the death of 12 workers.

After demonstrators stormed police headquarters, they were forced on to a railroad embankment by Soviet troops and fired at with antitank guns. At 1600 hours, Soviet tanks were used; rigorous action was taken against the rioters.

A Soviet court-martial pronounced seven death sentences, two of which were imposed on youths and four on Thaelmann Plant workers. In other cases, long prison sentences were imposed. A total of 138 casualties were caused by the Magdeburg uprisings.

#### 6. Uranium-Mining Region (Wismuth area, including Aue, Schwarzenberg, Johanngeorgenstadt, and Annaberg)

The reports on the sequence of events during the uprisings differ so widely that, to date, it has not been possible to obtain a clear picture of the actual course of events.

##### a. One source reported as follows:

There were no strikes or riots in the uranium mining region. Three armed members of the Vopo accompanied each shift of workers. All shafts were occupied by Soviet guard units. Vopo units were stationed at all railroad stations during the time that a state of emergency was in effect, that is, from 17 to 27 June. From two to six members of the Vopo were stationed on the trains. The inspection of identity papers was strictly enforced.

- 13 -

S-E-C-R-E-T

50X1-HUM

S-E-C-R-E-T

On 17 June, about 80,000 workers demanded that uranium-ore mining operations be suspended. SED buildings were demolished; town halls were stormed in Aue, Schwarzenberg, Johannegeorgenstadt, Marienberg, Eibenstock, Auerbach, and Falkenstein. In the course of clashes between the Vopo and the workers, about 560 Vopo men were disarmed and forced to participate in the procession of demonstrators.

In Aue and Annaberg, tanks bearing Soviet troops advanced on the demonstrators, some of whom barricaded themselves. Despite the early occupation of the shafts by Soviet troops armed with fixed bayonets (for example, 300 soldiers were posted in the shaft installation of Wismuth AG in Johannesthal), several installations were allegedly destroyed.

By the evening of 17 June, it had been established that there were 25 dead and 300 wounded throughout the entire uranium-mining region.

#### 7. Brandenburg/Havel

On 17 June, demonstrators stormed the detention house (where prisoners are kept pending investigation). The PKGB building was burned down. Part of the Gross Kreutz railroad station was burned down. Demonstrators stormed and seized the SED office and the lower court. Several judges and public prosecutors were knocked down. A number of SED functionaries were slain by participants in the riots. Attempts were made to start extensive forest fires in the Brandenburg area.

#### 8. Cottbus

Attempts by rioters to storm the County prison on 17 June were unsuccessful. A number of workers were killed.

#### 9. Erfurt

As a result of heavy street fights between demonstrating workers and the Vopo, 14 persons had died and 130 persons had suffered serious injuries by the evening of 17 June.

Vopo riot squads were disarmed.

Soviet tanks were used against the demonstrators. A wave of arrests took place, and numerous prosecutions, chiefly against youths, were announced.

#### 10. Finsterwalde

About 2,000 demonstrators stormed the Kreis Administration building on 17 June. Documents were burned. Vopo men were disarmed and knocked down.

#### 11. Gera

The starting point for demonstrations on 17 June was the EMW (Eisenach Motor Works), formerly called the BMW (Bavarian Motor Works). The local jail was stormed by rioters, and a great number of prisoners were freed. Attempts to storm the state prison failed. Several Vopo men were disarmed, and a number of Vopo vehicles were destroyed. At 1400 hours, Soviet tanks were used.

#### 12. Goerlitz

Demonstrators stormed the prison and released prisoners. The burgomaster was removed from his post.

- 14 -

S-E-C-R-E-T

50X1-HUM

S-E-C-R-E-T

## 13. Jena

The SSD building was demolished by rioters and stormed by the crowd. Political prisoners were set free, and documents were burned.

## 14. Quedlinburg

The demonstrations began as early as 0600 hours on 17 June. The SSD building on Breitscheidstrasse was stormed, and records were destroyed. The Kreis police station was taken over; police squads were disarmed and imprisoned in the cellars. The DFB (German Democratic Women's League) building and the Haus der Freiheit (House of Freedom) were stormed. A Soviet officer and two Soviet soldiers were disarmed by the crowd and thrown out of windows; all three were probably killed.

The Soviets retaliated with severe countermeasures, and numerous arrests were made.

## 15. Rathenow

The starting point for the demonstrations on 17 June was the Optical Works in Rathenow. Rioters occupied the SED office and burned records. Hagedorn (fma), SSD functionary, was killed by the crowd.

## 16. Rosslau

Demonstrators stormed the prison, and 180 prisoners were set free.

## 17. Rostock-Warnemuende

Workers in Rostock rioted on 17 June at the VEB Diesel Motor Plant. A large number of machines were rendered unserviceable, and fires were started in several workshops. Property damage was estimated at 500,000 Deutsche marks (East). (It was estimated that resumption of production would require 3-4 weeks.) Vopz riot squads were repelled by stones. Later, Soviet troops occupied the plant.

The Warnow Shipyard in Warnemuende and the Neptun Shipyard in Rostock were occupied by Soviet troops on 17 June 1953. When Soviet troops were employed against demonstrators in Warnemuende, two persons were killed at the outset. There were 150 arrests at the Warnow Shipyard on 18 June 1953. The total number of deaths in Rostock and Warnemuende was estimated at 40. It was established that over 250 were wounded.

The above data are to be evaluated as partial accounts and incomplete information only.

In addition to the courage of the workers who participated in the uprisings without the use of weapons, particular attention should be called to the fact that rioters in many cities tried to take over the key points. The demonstrators correctly considered these key points to be the town halls, the SED central offices, the police stations, the SSD buildings, and, in some cases, the important transportation centers. Thus, the Reichsbahn Directorate in Magdeburg was temporarily taken over by demonstrators; similar attempts were made in Gera, Goerlitz, and Stralsund. In the early afternoon of 17 June 1953, city administrations, SED headquarters, and police offices were forced to suspend operations in several cities. However, these successes were short-lived. Soviet troops broke up all centers of resistance on 17 June 1953, and restored authority to the offices which had been deprived of their power.

S-E-C-R-E-T

50X1-HUM

S-E-C-R-E-T

All news and reports consistently indicated that the actions of the rioters in the individual cities were not coordinated, and that central direction of the uprisings was out of the question.

C. Abatement of the Uprisings

The Soviet occupation authorities were able to break up the workers' riots in East Berlin and the GDR by proclaiming a state of emergency, by using strong Soviet army units with a great number of tanks, by summary executions under martial law, and by instituting rigorous control measures.

Despite the state of emergency, isolated strikes and demonstrations continued in East Berlin and the GDR on 18 June and in the GDR on 19 and 20 June, and even on 22 June in the Mansfeld copper mines.

The GDR authorities and the party offices were reinstated by the Soviet occupation powers. Mass arrests were made as early as 18 June in East Berlin and the GDR.

The sector border in East Berlin had been sealed off on 17 June. As the first relaxation of restrictions, three crossing points were opened; as of 23 June, it was possible, within certain limitations, to cross the sector border with a special permit. Operation of the S-Bahn (Berlin urban electric railroad) had been suspended during the riots, but on 23 June it was again running on schedule within the Soviet Sector. On 1 July, the sector border was entirely reopened.

In general, the state of emergency in the cities of the GDR, with the exception of a few cities in which the uprisings were very extensive, was ended on 25 and 26 June. The state of emergency in East Berlin was declared ended by the Soviet Commandant of the Soviet Sector, effective 2400 hours on 11 July.

IV. USE OF SOVIET OCCUPATION TROOPS DURING THE UPRISINGSA. Use of Soviet Troops in East Berlin1. Concentration of Soviet units

The demonstrations in Berlin on 16 June apparently caused the leading Soviet offices in the GDR, in the late evening hours of 16 June, to take precautions in the event of further riots in the Soviet Sector of Berlin. Thus, the Soviet ordered the first units of the 1st Mechanized Division, stationed in Doeberitz, to start moving as early as midnight of 16 June, via Potsdam, to the area south of Berlin. Units of this division, which presumably came directly from the Doeberitz training area, were observed at 0915 hours on 17 June traveling through Schoenefeld (with 25 tanks), and about 1300 hours at the sector border on Potsdamer Platz as well as in the East Berlin downtown area. The major part of the division did not follow until 0400 hours and later in the morning of 17 June; apparently each unit, after making preparations for the march, moved out individually.

With the beginning of the large-scale demonstrations on the morning of 17 June, it became evident that the forces of the 1st Mechanized Division, with the KVP and the regular police, would not be adequate to occupy and secure the entire Soviet Sector of Berlin and, at the same time, to barricade the sector borders. As a result, the 12th Guards Tank Division was also ordered to move from Neuruppin to Berlin. The major part of the division, spearheaded by 200 tanks which probably did not include any heavy tanks, set out from Neuruppin on the 80-kilometer march about 1300 hours on 17 June. About 60

- 16 -

S-E-C-R-E-T



S-E-C-R-E-T

50X1-HUM

trucks with munitions, from Wulkow, joined the moving columns. The first sections of the division probably did not reach the central part of the city before 2000 hours on 17 June; it was established that the first time the division went into action in East Berlin was on the afternoon of 18 June in the Gesundbrunnen area.

The same considerations which prompted the decision to use the 12th Guards Tank Division were probably also instrumental in the alerting of the 14th Guards Mechanized Division in Jueterbog in the morning of 17 June. This division was ordered to march to Berlin. Strong columns, with over 100 tanks, were observed moving along the Zossen-Lichtenrade road between 1500 and 1700 hours. Vehicles of this division were observed in action in Berlin for the first time on 24 June at the Ostkreuz Railroad Station.

### 2. Use of Troops in East Berlin

The units of the 1st Mechanized Division and the 12th Guards Tank Division, together with KVP units and the regular police, were used to seal off the sector border and to clear the streets. Some units of both divisions were presumably used to occupy large plants, railroad stations, and bridges. The Spree River, beginning at Humboldt Hafen, probably constituted the dividing line between the divisions. At most points along the sector border, the Soviet tank and other units had been relieved of actual guard duties by KVP and regular police as early as 19 June, and had withdrawn about 200-300 meters behind the sector border. It was only in the section from the Gesundbrunnen Railroad Station to Bernauer Strasse that tanks of the 12th Guards Tank Division remained in the front line. About 24-25 June, the KVP units which had been assigned to the sector border were replaced by regular police. At the same time, the divisions were increasingly concentrating their units at individual points in the city area, however, the location of these points was changed almost daily, probably to display to the populace, as clearly as possible and at as many different locations as possible, the strength of the Soviet troops. As of 21 June, the 14th Guards Mechanized Division, with strong forces, was stationed at Wuhlheide. It was probably intended to use this division as a reserve force. Besides the three divisions named, additional units were possibly used in the Berlin area.

### 3. Departure of Soviet Units from East Berlin

When conditions were becoming more normal in Berlin, the 14th Guards Mechanized Division, with most of its vehicles, was moved from Wuhlheide toward the south during the night of 27-28 June. On 27 and 28 June, the tank units of the division were entrained at the Stalin Allee, Adlershof, and Schoenevelde railroad stations; their destination was Jueterbog.

In early July, the 1st Mechanized Division assembled its units, which had been concentrated in individual groups in Berlin south of the Spree River and of Stalin Allee, in the Wuhlheide area. Toward the end of June, parts of the 12th Guards Tank Division began to pull out of Berlin proper to the area west of Buch and north of Berlin; other components, including heavy tank units, remained in the city. The further evacuation of the 12th Guards Tank Division, which had been planned for the week ending 4 July, appears to have been canceled in early July; thus, the division units remained in the Buch area and in Berlin proper. This measure may have been caused by the obdurate attitude of the populace, which was determined to strike again if the promises were not kept concerning better living conditions and the release of persons arrested in connection with the demonstrations on 17 June. It was not until 11 July that the tank units of these two divisions began to leave, from the Buch and Schoenevelde railroad stations, for Neurappin and Doeberitz. During the night of 12 July, parts of the 1st Mechanized Division departed, marching via Schoenefeld.

- 17 -

S-E-C-R-E-T

50X1-HUM

S-E-C-R-E-T

About 15 July, while parts of the 1st Mechanized Division and the 12th Guards Tank Division were still being evacuated from the East Berlin area, parts of the 7th Guards Mechanized Division from Fuerstenwalde and the 6th Guards Mechanized Division from Freienwalde were being sent to East Berlin, apparently to relieve the departing troops.

#### B. Use of Soviet Troops in the GDR

Soviet troops were used, on the one hand, to subdue the riots, and on the other hand -- in many cities -- as a precautionary measure only, to forestall demonstrations.

Soviet commanders proclaimed a state of emergency in most cities as early as 17 June, and in some cities on 18 June. In general, with the exception of specific focal centers of unrest, the state of emergency was ended after a period of 8 to 10 days.

When the uprisings started, most of the Soviet units were in summer camps at troop training grounds and the garrisons themselves were, to a large extent, devoid of troops. On 17 and 18 June, troop contingents were sent from the training places to the individual cities and industrial centers almost exclusively via highways, as was the case with the troops which were brought into Berlin. Tank units were transported by rail only from the Templin training area during the night of 16 June. Thus, units of the 8th Guards Mechanized Division, with motorized equipment, moved a distance of 120 kilometers from the Koenigsbrueck training area to Leipzig. This measure, which is contrary to all Soviet practices hitherto observed, may have been taken to save time; moreover, the uncertainty as to the extent the railroad workers would participate in the general uprisings may also have played a part. According to available reports, however, only the railroad workers in the area of Reichsbahn Division 5 (Wusterauh) joined in the strike on 17 and 18 June. Regular rail shipments were, in general, not observed again until 20 June.

Before the Soviet units from the training areas arrived in the various cities, reserve detachments stationed in these cities were frequently used to combat the demonstrations and to protect public buildings. Troops were sent into the cities until about 20 June and, in isolated cases, until 22 June. After about 25 June, usually after the state of emergency was rescinded, the troops began to return to the troop training grounds.

The following is a description of the use of Soviet troops in Halle, Leipzig, and Magdeburg, cities which were outstanding focal points of unrest:

##### 1. Halle Area

At 0800 hours on 17 June, the strikes began in the large plants in Halle, in the Buna Works in Schkopau, and in the Leuna Works near Merseburg. A total of 220,000 men went on strike. About 50 tanks were used in the city; in the evening hours, the tanks were reinforced by squads of motorcycle rifle-men and antitank-gun units. The state of emergency was announced about 2000 hours. During the night of 18 June, 50 Stalin tanks arrived from the direction of Dessau-Jueterbog. A general strike prevailed on 18 June; in some cases, strikes were still in effect in the morning hours of 19 June. The first troop units are said to have left on 19 June. On 20 June, three convoys, including 50 tanks from the Lossa training area and units of the 21st Guards Mechanized Division, were observed in Naumburg traveling in the direction of Berlin; these convoys were undoubtedly bound for Halle. On 23 June, a troop transport which allegedly came from Jueterbog was unloaded in Halle. On 29 June, the state of emergency had not yet been ended.

- 18 -

S-E-C-R-E-T

S-E-C-R-E-T

50X1-HUM

So far, it has not been possible to identify the troop units used. It is assumed, however, that at first, units of the Second Guards Mechanized Army -- possibly the 7th Guards Tank Division -- intervened, and that these units were later relieved by units of the 21st Guards Mechanized Division stationed in Halle.

## 2. Leipzig

At 1100 hours on 17 June, a state of emergency was proclaimed in Leipzig. The first of the troops to be used against the extensive uprisings was the Tank Instruction Battalion of the 8th Guards Mechanized Division from the Heiterblick barracks. About 0700 hours on 18 June, approximately 1,000 men arrived at the Schoenau barracks. Between 0900 and 1500 hours, 50 tanks, which presumably belonged to the 1st Guards Tank Regiment of the 8th Guards Mechanized Division and which came from the direction of Wurzen, arrived at the Heiterblick barracks. About 1700 hours, 20 additional tanks, presumably from the 20th Guards Mechanized Regiment of the 8th Guards Mechanized Division, arrived at the Heiterblick barracks. Furthermore, in the course of the afternoon of 18 June, large antiaircraft artillery and tank units, traveling on the Autobahn from the direction of Halle, were said to have gone to the Heiterblick barracks. By this time, 1,500 men were assembled in the Schoenau barracks, and larger units, with 60 tanks belonging to the 64th Heavy Tank and Self-Propelled Artillery Regiment of the 8th Guards Mechanized Division, were located in the barracks area. Parts of this regiment, with 24 heavy tanks, were seen on 17 June moving from Grimma to Leipzig. On 22 June, the garrison headquarters was guarded by six additional tanks.

It has been established without a doubt that early on 18 June, large units of the 8th Guards Mechanized Division were assigned to the city. As reinforcements, the two tank regiments of the 8th Guards Mechanized Division from Borna and Leisnig, as well as components (chiefly tank units) of the 20th Guards Mechanized Regiment of the 8th Guards Mechanized Division from Grimma, joined the units of the division permanently stationed in Leipzig. The troop units which allegedly advanced from the direction of Halle could not be identified, it is possible that they belonged to the 7th Guards Tank Division. The large units of the 8th Guards Mechanized Division which were sent in from Koenigsbrunn were probably alerted during the afternoon of 17 June, and were started on their way in the evening hours of the same day.

## 3. Magdeburg

In Magdeburg, extensive riots and strikes began in all plants in the morning hours of 17 June. The fact that the regular police force had left for Berlin on 16 June was advantageous for the demonstrations. There are contradictory reports as to when the first Soviet tanks were used against the demonstrations; some reports give the time as 1000 hours, while others claim that it was 1500 hours. According to reports from Magdeburg and, from Haldensleben concerning the departure of tank units from the southern part of Letzlinger Heide in the direction of Magdeburg, large parts of the 19th Guards Mechanized Division, as well as the troops of the Third Shock Army situated in the barracks, must have been assigned to quell the riots on 17 June. On 20 June, some strikes were still going on; however, most of the troop units had withdrawn from the city and had encircled the city in a state of combat readiness. On 22 June, peace reigned in the city.

In addition to the 19th Guards Mechanized Division, parts of an engineer regiment were brought into Magdeburg on 17 June.

- 19 -

S-E-C-R-E-T

50X1-HUM

S-E-C-R-E-T

### C. Summary of Commitment of Soviet Army Units in East Berlin and the GDR

The alerted troops were equipped with steel helmets, gas masks, full pack, and blankets. The fact that numerous munitions trucks from ammunition depots accompanied the marching columns indicates that, in addition to the two thirds of full combat issue of ammunition for weapons, apparently the battalion and regimental supply carriers transported one third of full combat issue of ammunition. Gasoline was continually brought in from the various garrisons.

The main streets were cleared by wedge-shaped tank formations, followed by motorized infantry units, which forced the crowds into the side streets. Important building complexes and crossroads were guarded by tanks, as well as by 76-millimeter field guns and 57-millimeter antitank guns. Additional protection was provided in the vicinity of all Soviet quarters by the erection of 12.7-millimeter antiaircraft machine guns. The air vents in the rear of the tanks were partially covered with tarpaulin, probably for protection against incendiary agents and burning debris. The troops assigned to Berlin erected aid stations, using new tents of German manufacture. The members on tanks and vehicles were not always covered, and the methods of concealment used were not uniform; thus, materials were pasted over some numbers and other numbers were covered with chalk.

Observers in the Potsdam area reported that when the troops were alerted, the Soviet families were assembled, very hurriedly in some cases, in the barracks.

In general, the Soviet troops which were used gave the impression of being well-disciplined and trained.

Of the 22 combat units stationed in the GDR, it was determined that components of 19 units were used during the uprisings, some of these units were engaged only in patrol service in their areas (see Appendix 2).

### D. Alerting of Soviet Air Force During the Uprisings

Whereas normal flight-practice operations were still going on at all bases on 16 June, apparently an all-out alarm was sounded on 17 June for the fighter aircraft regiments [sic] in the GDR.

Thus, on 17 June, the fighter regiment which had been transferred in early June from Doeberitz to Brandenburg-Briest was reassigned to the Doeberitz air base. The crews stood by the aircraft, and ten bombs were held in readiness at each plane. The air base boundaries were more strictly guarded. At the Brandis air base, where another fighter aircraft regiment was stationed, there were also aircraft ready to take off, each occupied by two men. Also at this air base, special guards were posted, several tanks were moved in, and anti-aircraft guns were set up.

The rest of the air force units were engaged in normal flight-practice operations on 17 June.

On 18 June, all flying operations stopped; all air force units in the GDR were in a state of alert; the crews stood by the aircraft; the aircraft were dispersed over the airfield, and some were parked behind revetments. Trucks and tank trucks were covered with camouflage netting, and security measures at the air bases were intensified.

Most of the flying units were still under alert orders on 19 June. Only limited flying operations, involving transport and reconnaissance aircraft, were observed.

- 20 -

S-E-C-R-E-T

50X1-HUM

S-E-C-R-E-T

On 20 June 1953, the alert was lifted and normal flying operations were resumed. The fighter regiment which had been transferred to Doeberitz on 17 June was reassigned to Brandenburg-Briest on 22 June.

V. USE OF PEOPLE'S POLICE DURING THE RIOTS IN EAST BERLIN AND THE GDRA. Effects of the "New Course" on the KVP

The change in policy introduced by the GDR government during the first half of June resulted in the following incisive measures affecting the People's Police:

1. The construction projects of the KVP were curtailed.
2. The military training of SED and FDJ members from 18 to 30 years of age, a program which the KVP had already started, was discontinued.
3. Recruiting for the KVP was temporarily suspended.
4. The Oranienburg, Brandenburg-Hohenstuecken, and possibly Potsdam cadre divisions, which were called "Verbände" (units or task forces) and which are directly subordinate to the Ministry of Interior, were renamed "Bereitschaften" (alert units); the regiments subordinate to those divisions were renamed "Kommandos." Thus, these units were given the same designations they had before their build-up was begun in the spring of 1952. Whether the use of the old designations also involves organizational changes, or whether this measure is intended only as a pretense that these units are merely police units, remains to be seen.

Rumors concerning the release of 40,000-60,000 men in the KVP have not been confirmed.

B. Use and Conduct of the KVP During the Uprisings

During the riots, the KVP was used preponderantly in the areas in which its garrisons were located. Reinforcement units were sent to the Berlin area from the area of the Army Group North (Armeegruppe Nord) and from Sachsen. A large part of the KVP units and training schools were only alerted and were not actually used.

Established reports concerning the activities of the KVP include the following:

1. The Oranienburg alert unit (cadre division) was alerted at 0530 hours on 17 June. Two thousand men were sent in a motor-vehicle convoy to Berlin where they were first assigned to Alexanderplatz and later dispersed in Treptow.
2. From 16 to 20 June, KVP units were evacuated from the KVP Weisswasser troop-training area and were reassigned to their garrisons. On 25 June, the Nochten camp was again occupied by 800 KVP men.
3. Five KVP companies at Pasevalk were assigned to Berlin on 17 June. They returned to Pasevalk on 29 and 30 September 1953.
4. The Prora KVP Division was alerted on 19 June, but was not used.
5. Since the Leipzig KVP units had to be returned from the Weisswasser troop-training area, they could not be employed in Leipzig until 18 June. The KVP remained on duty in Leipzig until 25 June, whereas the Soviet troops, which had been assigned there on 18 June as a security force, were relieved of their duties as early as 23 June.

- 21 -

S-E-C-R-E-T

50X1-HUM

S-E-C-R-E-T

6. A KVP battalion from the Baerenstein-Niederschlag unit was employed in Berlin on 20 June. (This KVP group was from one of the garrisons most distant from Berlin.)

7. The artillery barracks of the Halle KVP unit, which are occupied by 1,500 men, were guarded by Soviet units on 17 June.

8. On 25 June, the bulk of the Rostock KVP unit, which had not been used at first, was moved to the zonal border.

9. In the area of the Army Group North, special training programs already underway were not suspended during the uprisings.

10. In addition to the KVP units, some of which were transported to Berlin from remote garrisons, units of the border police (which encircled Berlin) and of the regular police (some of which likewise came from distant cities such as Goerlitz) were assigned to Berlin.

The conduct of the KVP members was extremely varied; reports on their behavior range from desertion to ruthless shooting. On the basis of an evaluation of all available reports, the KVP cannot be considered reliable, as far as the Soviet rulers are concerned, for use on the home front.

#### C. Sea Police During the Uprisings

The Sea Police were not used in connection with the uprisings. The flotillas at Peenemuende apparently were alerted on 18 June and went to sea in a group; only two unidentified vessels remained in port. The flotillas did not return to port until 25 June.

It is possible that the crews were not considered absolutely reliable, and the flotillas were ordered to sea to prevent desertion or mutiny. It was for this reason that, in November 1918, individual German naval units with unreliable crews were ordered to sea.

### VI. PSYCHOLOGICAL BACKGROUND AND CONSEQUENCES OF THE UPRISINGS

The uprisings were the culmination of a pronounced revolutionary situation in the GDR, which was brought about by the forced sovietization of the GDR with regard to the basic needs of the populace. Although signs of unrest, strikes, etc. gave a forewarning of the outbreak of the uprisings, both East and West were taken unawares.

The chief supporters of the riots were the workers of the GDR, who had been driven beyond endurance and who had no regard for their own safety. Encouraged by the West and, for the first time after 8 years of suppression, emerging from the isolation which exists under the system, the workers became conscious of their revolutionary power, though in some cases their emotional fervor caused them to overestimate the possibilities.

The transition from purely economic demands to political demands was an indication of a genuine people's rebellion. The results which might have been expected were not attained because of the lack of planning and of organization on a psychological level. There was public demand for leadership; because of the solidarity declarations of the West, this leadership was expected. The present psychology of the people is characterized, on the one hand, by disappointment over the passivity of the West, and, on the other hand, by hope for a change in the future. It was not so much the heavy casualties during the riots as the terroristic measures undertaken by the Communist system after the riots which contributed to the feeling of hopelessness.

- 22 -

S-E-C-R-E-T

50X1-HUM

**S-E-C-R-E-T**

The uprisings demonstrated a certain reserve on the part of the bourgeois intelligentsia, who were prepared to take part in them but not to make any sacrifices. Thus, the focal point of revolutionary potential was with the workers.

The unreliability of lower level functionaries and particularly of the FDJ and the Vopo was exposed. Their conduct ranged from insubordination to fanatical use of weapons. The very diversity of their conduct destroyed their effectiveness for use on the home front.

The Soviet troops which were assigned, with apparent reluctance, to suppress the uprisings were suddenly confronted with a situation contradictory to their ideological training -- they were required to fire at the German working proletariat. Remembering the principles and demands of their own revolution, they had to fight on the wrong side. Undoubtedly the slogans concerning Western provocation failed to achieve their objective as far as many soldiers were concerned. These soldiers, who had been indoctrinated with a fatalistic military obedience, witnessed for the first time a genuine revolt against the system. It would be a mistake and an underestimation of the discipline of the Soviet Army to assume that this would adversely affect the future military value of the Soviet Army. Experience proves, however, that the truth concerning the events will be spread among the peoples in the USSR.

The revolt cannot help but affect the other satellite countries.

In connection with the uprisings, the West was frequently censured for giving only lip service to its declarations of solidarity. The uprisings showed the West that it has an obligation, which is also to its own interest, to promote the welfare of all the people. In their evaluations of the events, the Western press and radio neglected to present, in psychologically apt form, the relationship of the uprisings to Bolshevik doctrine; they also failed to strike at Soviet propaganda with its own weapons, to cut the ground from under Communist infiltration, and to promote effectively the consolidation of Europe.

#### ENCLOSURE 1

##### List of GDR Cities Involved in the Uprisings

|                |                |               |
|----------------|----------------|---------------|
| Apolda         | Gera           | Rosslau       |
| Arnstadt       | Goerlitz       | Rostock       |
| Aue            | Gotha          | Saalfeld      |
| Bautzen        | Guben          | Sangershausen |
| Belzig         | Questrow       | Schwerin      |
| Beskow         | Halberstadt    | Seelow        |
| Bitterfeld     | Halle          | Stavenhagen   |
| Blankenburg    | Jena           | Stassfurt     |
| Brandenburg    | Lauchhammer    | Stendal       |
| Chemnitz       | Leipzig        | Stralsund     |
| Coswig         | Leuna          | Thale         |
| Cottbus        | Magdeburg      | Torgau        |
| Delitzsch      | Meissen        | Waldheim      |
| Dessau         | Merseburg      | Warnemunde    |
| Dresden        | Neubrandenburg | Weimar        |
| Eilenburg      | Nordhausen     | Weissenfels   |
| Eisleben       | Oebisfelde     | Wismar        |
| Erfurt         | Parchim        | Wittenberg    |
| Finsterwalde   | Potsdam        | Wusterhausen  |
| Frankfurt/Oder | Quedlinburg    | Zella-Mehlis  |
| Freithal       | Rathenow       | Zossen        |
| Fuerstenberg   | Riesa          | Zwickau       |
| Fuerstenwalde  |                |               |

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50X1-HUM

ENCLOSURE 2List of Soviet Combat Divisions Used to Quell the Uprisings

| <u>Name of Unit</u>             | <u>Assignment or Use</u>  |
|---------------------------------|---|
| 57th Guards Rifle Division      | The division was probably used only for patrol duty in the Weissenfels-Naumburg-Eisenach area.  |
| 39th Guards Rifle Division      | Most of the units were probably used only for patrol duty in the Meiningen-Ohrdruf-Plauen-Saalfeld area. Some units from Plauen were assigned to the uranium-mining area from 17 to 22 June.  |
| 20th Guards Mechanized Division | The division was sent from the Ohrdruf training grounds for assignment to Weimar and Zeitz from 17 to 26 June; it is probable that units were also used in Jena.  |
| 21st Guards Mechanized Division | The division was used in Halle.   |
| 94th Guards Rifle Division      | The division was probably used only for patrol duty in the Wismar-Schwerin-Bagenov area.  |
| 227th Guards Rifle Division     | The division was sent from Letzlinger Heide for use in Quedlinburg, Gommern, and the Aschersleben-Eisleben area; presumably it was also used in Stendal.  |
| 16th Mechanized Division        | Parts of the division were sent from the Wittstock training grounds for use in Perleberg from 17 to 27 June.  |
| 19th Guards Mechanized Division | Most of the units were assigned to Magdeburg as of 17 June. It is probable that by 6 July, almost all units used had returned to Letzlinger Heide.  |
| 11th Guards Tank Division       | Large sections of the division were sent from the Koenigsbrueck training grounds for use in Dresden, and possibly also in Bautzen, from 17 June to about 1 July.  |
| 9th Tank Division               | On 18 June, the first components of the division arrived in Riesa and Oschatz from the Zeithain training grounds. Since there were still very few personnel stationed at the training grounds on 2 July, it can be assumed that most of the components of the division were in their three garrisons at Riesa, Oschatz, and Meissen at this time. |

- 24 -

S-E-C-R-E-T



50X1-HUM

S-E-C-R-E-T

| <u>Name of Unit</u>             | <u>Assignment or Use</u>   |
|---------------------------------|--|
| 8th Guards Mechanized Division  | Most of the units of the division (at least two mechanized regiments and two tank regiments) were sent from the Koenigsbrueck training grounds for assignment to Leipzig from 18 June to 2 July. After 2 July, some units, possibly parts of a mechanized regiment of the division, remained at the Heiterblick barracks in Leipzig. In addition, small sections of the division were identified in Grimma, Wurzen, and Leisnig from 18 June until their departure on 2 July.  |
| 14th Guards Mechanized Division | The major part of the division was assigned to Berlin from 17 to 28 June.  |
| 9th Mechanized Division         | The camp at the Forst Tauer training grounds was almost vacant from 18 to 26 June. It was established that about half of the division was situated at the barracks in Cottbus on 18 and 19 June; there were very few personnel billeted at the barracks in Luebben during this period. It was reported that on 17 and 18 June, about 100 tanks were observed moving from the direction of Cottbus, through Muskau, in the direction of Miesky-Goerlitz. Although units of the division were not identified in the Goerlitz area, it appears possible that they were used there, since the Reichsbahn was ordered to dispatch empty railroad cars to Goerlitz as of 5 July. |
| 6th Guards Tank Division        | On 18 June, tank units from the Werder-Markendorf training grounds were assigned to Wittenberg and Dessau. On 26 June some of these units were transferred from Dessau to Wittenberg, and on 9 July, from Wittenberg to the Jueterbog area.  |
| 7th Guards Tank Division        | Parts of the division were used in the Dessau-Rosslau area as of 17 June; whether these units were reserve detachments remaining at the Rosslau garrison or whether units of the division were transported from Letzlinger Heide could not be determined. Parts of the division may have been assigned to the Halle-Merseburg area, but there has been no confirmation of this.  |
| 1st Mechanized Division         | The majority of the units were assigned to the Soviet Sector of Berlin from 17 June to 12 July.  |

- 25 -

S-E-C-R-E-T

S-E-C-R-E-T

50X1-HUM

| <u>Name of Units</u>           | <u>Assignment or Use</u>  |
|--------------------------------|---|
| 12th Guards Tank Division      | The majority of the units were assigned to the Soviet Sector of Berlin from 17 June to 12 July.   |
| 9th Guards Tank Division       | Most units of the division were undoubtedly used only for security tasks in the Neustrelitz-Neubrandenburg area. The extent to which the 33d Guards Motorized Rifle Regiment, from the barracks at Castaven Lake near Fuerstenberg, was used in the Berlin area could not be definitely established.  |
| 6th Guards Mechanized Division | Most units of the division apparently marched or were transported from the Templin training grounds during the period from 17 to 30 June. It is presumed but there has been no confirmation, that parts of the division were assigned to the outskirts of Berlin until about 23 June. Until about 10 July, almost all units of the division were billeted in the Eberswalde, Bernau, and Bad Freienwalde garrisons. |
| 7th Guards Mechanized Division | There are no concrete data concerning the possible use of the division. There is no doubt that, as of 17 June, parts of the division from the Lieberose training grounds were located in Frankfurt/Oder.  |
| 25th Tank Division             | Small units from the Templin training grounds were in Oranienburg from 17 to 26 June.   |
| 10th Guards Tank Division      | The use of individual units of the division in the Brandenburg-Potsdam area has been surmised, but has not been definitely established.   |

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- 26 -

S-E-C-R-E-T